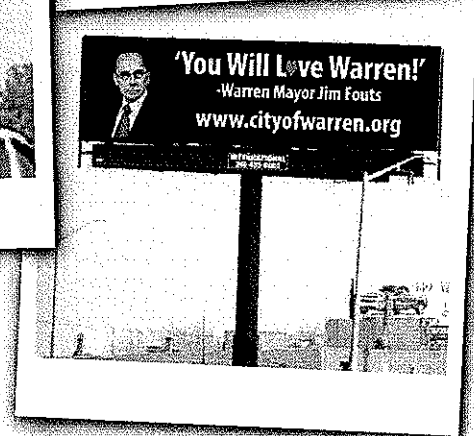
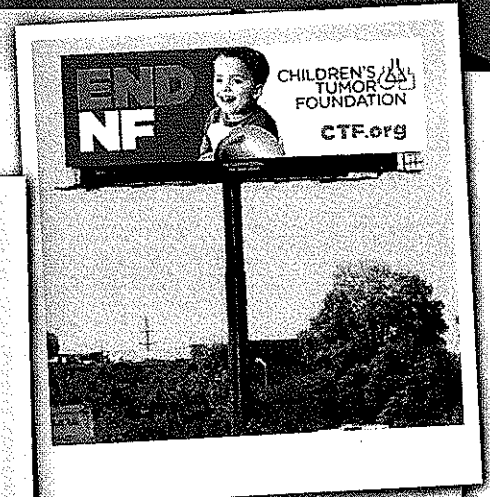
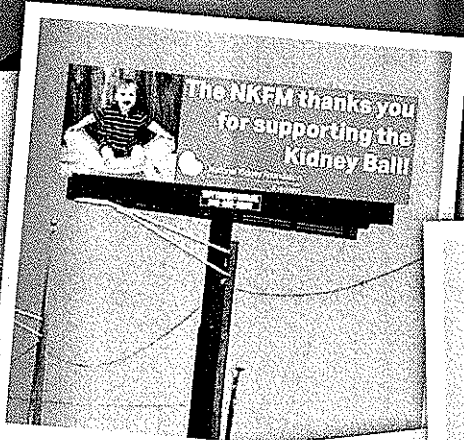




# GIVING BACK



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SB953  
Randy Oram

# *Vision Properties of Michigan, Inc.*

Dear Senators,

This letter is in response to MDOT's position of denying the conversion of two of our existing static billboards to digital billboards. Their position is that the signs were not originally "erected" prior to March 23, 1999 and are therefore considered non-conforming signs.

The following timeline provides the activity and effort put into by Vision Properties of Michigan that secured permits for 16030 Edsel Ford Freeway prior to March 23, 1999. We believe by showing this activity it provides adequate evidence that our company meets the definition in the newly amended Highway Advertising Act to be considered a non-standard sign "erected" before March 23, 1999 and not a non-conforming sign as MDOT defines it.

The definitions of a non-standard sign and the word erect, that cover the construction of a sign as defined by the legislation, are key in the determination of whether our sign may or may not be converted to a digital. Please review the timeline on the next page which defines the process we took and the expense involved to convert our signs.

Thank you for your time and consideration in this matter.

Sincerely,

Randy Oram, President

# *Vision Properties of Michigan, Inc.*

## TIMELINE OF EVENTS OF BILLBOARD LOCATED AT 16030 EDSSEL FORD FREEWAY

### Original Construction of sign:

1. Purchased property for sole purpose of a billboard - **October 30, 1997**
2. Recorded deed of purchased property – **February 13, 1998**
3. Applied for a MDOT commercial sign permits (14' x 48') – **November 4, 1997**
4. Received a MDOT commercial sign permit (14' x 48') – **December 2, 1997**
5. Received court judgment on quiet title of property – **March 27, 1998**
6. Renewed MDOT permits – **October 1, 1998**
7. Received an address from the City of Detroit **January 15, 1999**
8. Applied for a building permit from the City of Detroit (14 x 48) – **February 25, 1999**
9. Contacted Miss Dig - **March 4, 1999**
10. Received building permit from the city – **March 10, 1999**
11. Applied for new MDOT permits that reflect a 20' x 60' billboard – **March 17, 1999**
12. Received newly commissioned engineering plans for a 20' x 60' billboard - **March 22, 1999**
13. Received MDOT approval for permits for the proposed 20' x 60' billboard - Approval letter dated **March 20, 1999** – Annual permits signed on **March 22, 1999** - received permit approval letter via mail on **March 24, 1999**.
14. New legislation took effect on **March 23, 1999**

### Application to convert existing sign to digital:

1. New legislation took immediate effect without an application process in place on **Jan 28, 2014**.
2. Vision Properties applied for a digital permit for its EB face on **February 4, 2014**
3. Vision Properties received permit approval (2014DS31) to convert their EB billboard face to digital on **May 29, 2014**.
4. Vision Properties applied for a digital permit for their WB face on **February 13, 2015**
5. Vision Properties received a letter from MDOT denying our WB face application (1750) and revoked our EB digital permit that was already issued on **February 25, 2015**.

### Definitions:

MDOT defines the word "erect" in Section 252.302.2.(l) of the newly amended Highway Advertising Act as - **"Erect"** means to construct, build, raise, assemble, place, affix, attach, create, paint, draw, or in any other way bring into being or establish.

MDOT defines the word "Non-standard" in Section 252.302.2.(x) of the newly amended Highway Advertising Act as – **"Non-standard"** means a sign or sign structure other than a non-conforming sign, that is subject to this act, was legally erected before March 23, 1999, ...

# *Vision Properties of Michigan, Inc.*

## Summary:

MDOT does not define the word constructed; it only defines the word "erect". Our sign meets the definition of erect but, MDOT denied said application above and revoked an already approved digital permit because the sign wasn't "constructed" before March 23, 1999. This is irrelevant because this sign did not have to be "constructed" as MDOT's denial letter states it only had to be "erected" and our sign clearly meets the requirement of "erect".

MDOT reversed its approval of permit 2014DS31 and now considers this sign location a non-conforming sign. The denial stemmed from MDOT's interpretation of the definition of erect that is in the Act that labels our billboard a non-conforming sign which by law cannot be converted to a digital sign. A non-conforming sign is a sign that was built after March 23, 1999 and does not meet the spacing requirement of 1,750'.

For the above reasons we are contesting MDOT's decision to deny application 1750 and revoke digital permit 2014DS31. Furthermore, with these newly defined parameters as well as our timeline we have just laid out, we respectfully ask that you assist us in reversing MDOT's position and get our EB digital permit be re-instated and our WB digital application be approved. Both of these signs would fall under the 8 nonstandard signs that were allowed after the last amendment but were to expire on January 1, 2016 and if not reinstated should not be required to surrender 3 interim permit for each site to be reinstated.

Definition of Erect as defined in the House Bill 4629:

(1) "Erect" means to construct, build, raise, assemble, place, affix, attach, create, paint, draw, or in any other way bring into being or establish.



View at 1,000 ft



View at 700 ft



View at 500 ft